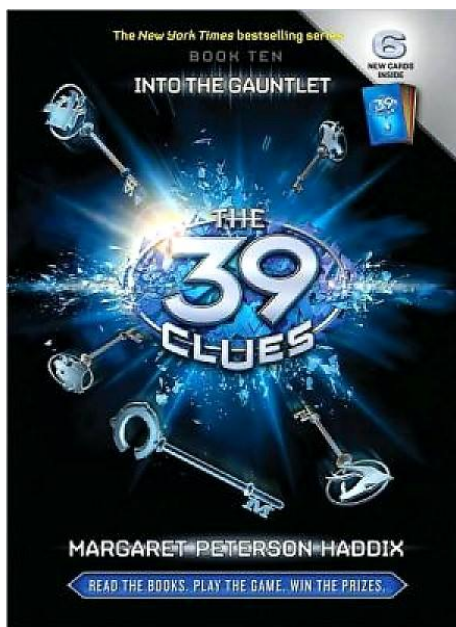




The Starred Review

This is a monthly newsletter that will let you know the titles that our review committee felt were outstanding.



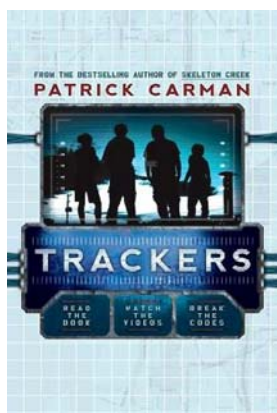
Into the Gauntlet Margaret Peterson Haddix
2010 Scholastic Inc. 39 Clues 978-0-545-09068-1
"Fiction Mystery/Adventure"

In this final book of the 39 Clues series, find out how all of the clues fit together and what the ultimate goal was for the Cahill family. Margaret Peterson Haddix does a nice job summarizing and concluding the work of 7 authors. I was excited and disappointed when I got this book to evaluate. I had only read the first 6 in the series, so skipping to the last would not have been my choice. The book mentions some of the things that happen in the previous books, but not in enough detail you would be able to understand all of the circumstances without reading the other titles. The idea of this series, having a different author for each title, was a great draw for me, and having Haddix do the final...brilliant. Some parts of the series seemed a bit violent for the 3-4 grade reading level these are geared toward, but a definite draw for reluctant readers. Fun series and can't wait for the sequel this title alluded to. Stephannie Shelton

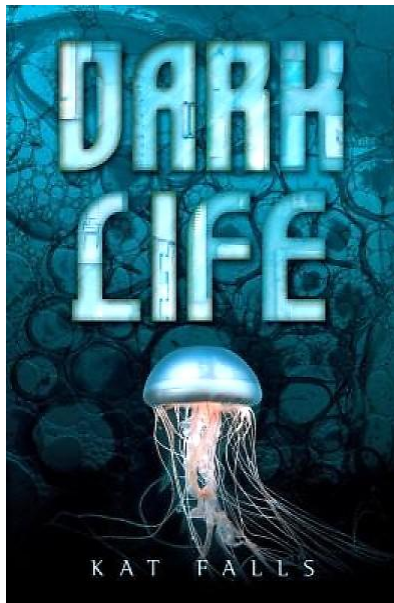
Movie For Dogs Lois Duncan 2010 Scholastic Inc.
978-0-545-10854-6 "Fiction Writing"

Andi and Bruce are on another dog adventure. Andi enters a story in a contest and comes in second to her arch rival. She is devastated, so Bruce and Aunt Alice look for another contest that Andi could enter. This time it is a screenplay, a movie and the dogs are the stars.

Fun, easy read with lots of twists. This story is for suitable interest for 2-4 grade readers. It jumps around a little, probably because it takes for granted the reader had already read Hotel for Dogs and News for Dogs. The story is simple and predictable, but also fun and entertaining. Stephannie Shelton



Trackers Book One by Patrick Carman 2010 Scholastic Press Series-Trackers 978-0-545-16500-6 Technology; Computers; Realistic Fiction; Teamwork Four teens work together to protect technological inventions that they use as investigative devices. The tense, technology in action brought to mind the movie "Hackers" as the teens are set up by the Glyphmaster. I didn't like the thought of having to view videos as I read. So, having the transcripts of the videos in the Appendix was a great idea. This book is all text - no illustrations whatsoever. The videos do add to the experience and are fun to watch. Great read for those with a technological bent, or those wishing for a good mystery. I look forward to future installments of this series. Karen Forbes



Dark Life by Kat Falls 2010 Scholastic Press
978-0-545-17814-3

Science Fiction; Undersea Colonies A 15-year-old, whose parents were pioneers in settling the ocean floor, joins forces with a Topside girl to find outlaws in that frontier and in so doing learns of government involvement. Wonderful adventure mystery in an interesting environment with many dark recesses. The author does a great job of explaining how the living quarters work on the ocean floor. Rather reminiscent of taming our frontier so many years ago. Humorous scenes intermixed with serious keep the action moving along at a good clip, solving mysteries along the way. No illustrations. A possible look at our future?!? Karen Forbes

Title-George Wahington's Spy

Author- Elvira Woodruff

Copyright-2010

ISBN- 978-0-545-10487-6

Publisher- Scholastic

Curriculum Con.- Historical Fiction-

Revolutionary War,

Science Fiction- time travel

Brief Summary-



Seven kids, from a small Midwestern town, time travel back to Boston during the Revolutionary War. While there, the kids are split up, some stay with Loyalist, some with Patriots. The main character, Matt, goes on a spy mission for George Washington; a spy mission that helps end the Revolutionary War. Eventually the kids are reunited and try to find the "time machine" to bring them back to the future

Opinion-

Well written, entertaining story that makes you forget that you are learning about our history. I didn't want it to end.

Critique-

This historical fiction book gives the reader a nice tasting of the Revolutionary War. The author does a great job giving the reader a hint of what life would be like if you were living in the 1700's. This would be a great read aloud during the Revolutionary War unit. After the story is concluded, the author has information on parts of history that is mentioned in the story (for instance, information on spys, Leeches, Boston in 1776). This is a sequel to George Washington's Socks!

The Suburb Beyond the Stars

Author: M.T. Anderson Copyright: 2010

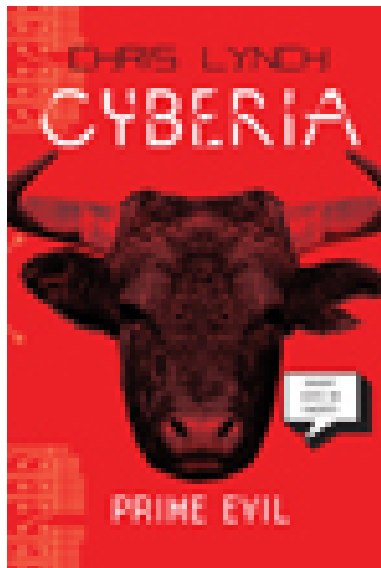
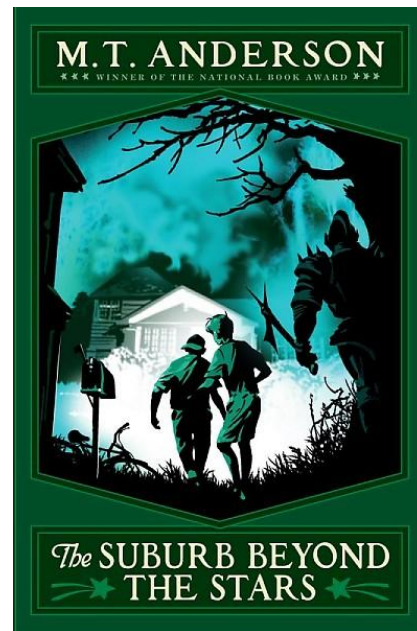
Publisher: Scholastic Press

Series: The Game of Sunken Places

Curriculum Connection: Fantasy Fiction

Brian and Gregory return to Vermont, the place where they were thrown into the "Game of Sunken Places" a world controlled by strange creatures from another world. Gregory's cousin, Prudence, whom lives in the area, seems to have disappeared. When they arrive all is not as it should be; people are acting strangely, Prudence is not to be found, and time is even out of whack. A fast paced adventure follows that could save the human world from destruction. Can Gregory and Brian figure out what is happening in time to save Prudence and more importantly, humanity? This is a page turning adventure good for students in 4th through 7th grades.

For students that enjoy fantasy and science fiction this book will keep them reading to find out what will happen next. Sometimes a little difficult to grasp, the concept can be at times complicated, but keep reading and it works itself out. Overall this is

**Prime Evil** Author: Chris Lynch

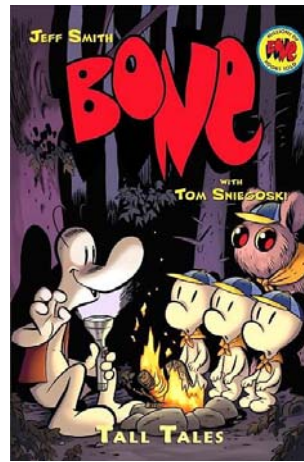
Series: Cyberia Publisher: Scholastic Press, 2010

Curriculum Connection: Fantasy Fiction

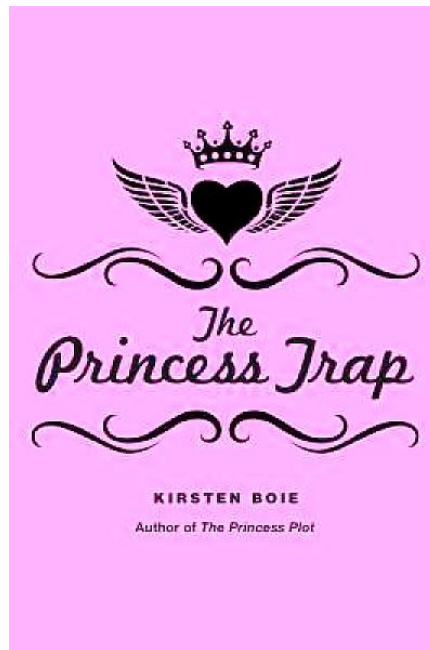
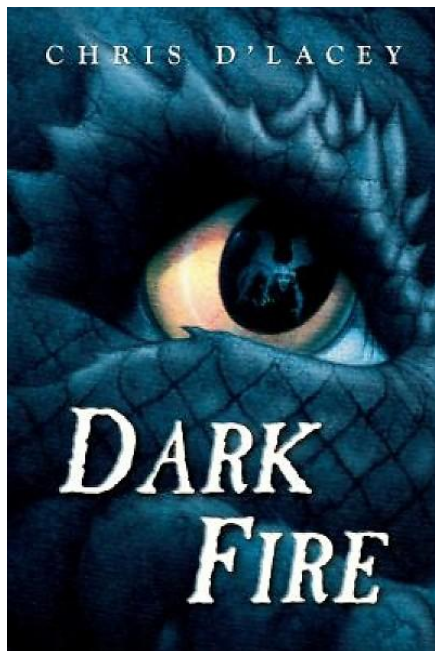
The Third book in a series, Prime Evil, is about a boy, Zane, who can talk to animals. Zane's nemesis, the evil Dr. Gristle, has sent Zane to a strange Ranch in the middle of nowhere for what is considered a much need attitude adjustment. Zane is greeted at the ranch by a group of very angry animals and then embarks on an adventure to find out what Dr. Gristle is doing to the animals and how he can stop him.

For kids in 4th through 8th grade that like fantasy and science fiction this is a fast paced read that is full of mystery and adventure. As a futuristic look at good versus evil the book will keep readers attention to see who will prevail. There is not much character development, but for readers that are plot driven this will be a fast and exciting read. Susan Irwin

Bone, Tall Tales Jeff Smith 2010 Scholastic Bone
 978-0-545-14095-9 Graphic Novel, Tall Tales Smiley
 Bone takes the Bone Scouts camping and tells them some tall tales involving several of his relatives and Big Johnson Bone the famous explorer and frontiersman. When the stories are finished for the night one of the young Bone Scouts sneaks off to bed with the scout leaders big hat and has an unusual dream about Big Johnson Bone and the Rat creatures. Bone Tall Tales is an entertaining graphic novel. Adventure and humor abounds in this Tall Tale version of the Bone graphic novels. The campfire sets the stage for some interesting stories that fans of the Bone series will surely find entertaining. The characters are fun and the illustrations are well done.
 Dennise Taggart

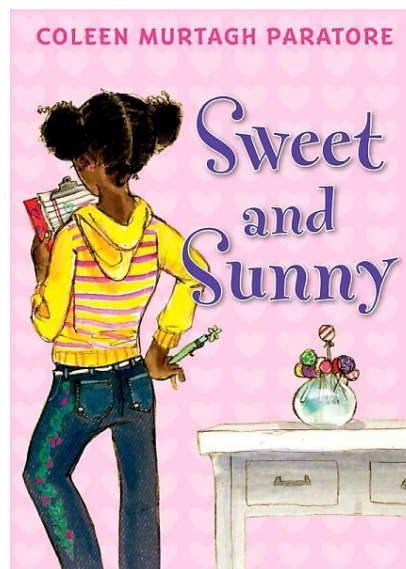


The Princess Trap Boie, Kristen 2009 Scholastic Press
 978-0545-22261-7 AR A follow up to the Princess Plot. Life as a princess equals a dream come true, but between palace rules, a mean queen-bee roomie at her posh boarding school, the ever-present paparazzi, and her unrequited crushing on Jonas, Jenna finds herself wishing for plain old anonymity again. Along with a subplots about overthrowing the government and starvation A really good book. " The story is recommended for 6-8. The story flows along but does get bogged down at times with the multiple story lines, vast amount of characters. Higher readers will be challenged to keep up with all the intricate details of the story. Carolyn Major



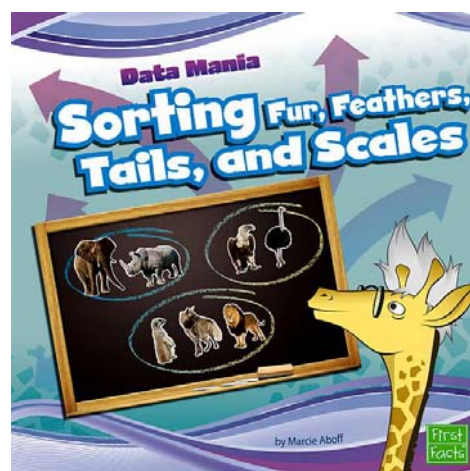
Dark Fire Chris D'Lacey 2009 Orchard Books
 Last Dragon Chronicles
 978-0-545-10272-8
 Fantasy In this fifth book of the Last Dragon Chronicles series, David Rain returns after being lost and presumed dead for 5 years. He reunites with Liz, Lucy, Zanna and his 5 year old daughter Alexa to combat the evil forces that are attempting to gain power and control in our universe. Dark Fire is an entertaining action packed fantasy adventure. The author inserts enough information about the characters to understand the plot without having read the other books. The differing age range of the characters allows for a wide range of reader appeal. Following the dragon lore was a little difficult at times but the fast paced action keeps the story moving. A very enjoyable read. Dennise Taggart

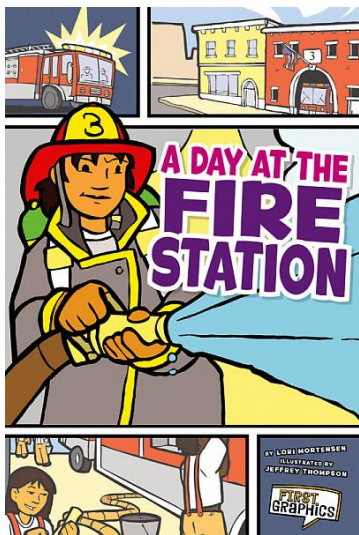
Sweet and Sunny Paratore, Coleen Murtagh 2010 Scholastic Press Sunny Holiday 978-0-545-07582-4 4th grade character, adversity Sweet and Sunny is the second book by author Coleen Murtagh Paratore about an inner city girl named Sunny Holiday. Sunny faces several obstacles in this story from weather, mean girls at school and grumpy neighbors to her mom losing her job while her father is in jail. Despite her many disappointments, with the support of her good friend Jazzy and her mom, Sunny is able to maintain her optimism and bring joy to those around her. The characters are realistic and the story is heart warming. This story is very well written the characters come alive on the page and the setting is believable and well described. The chapters are a good length and the story has plenty of momentum that will keep the reader turning the pages. The author offers a very realistic view of what is like for a young 4th grade girl growing up in the inner city. Dennise Taggart



Wish I might Paratore, Coleen Murtagh 2010 Scholastic Press From the life of Willa Havisham 978--0-545-09406-1 AR For fourteen-year-old Willa, summer on Cape Cod is lonely with her boyfriend away and her best friend missing, but she fills her time with books and working on a secret project with the half-brother who just entered her life. A god book for 5th grade on up. This is a quick read book. With lots of quotes from some very well known books and a quick flowing story the reading moves along fast. The writer calls them "skinny-punch" books, a book that is fairly quick to read but has a powerful impact. She gives Written for the lower reader but the content is higher. The book deals with death, changing friendships and growing up. I would recommend this book for 5th grade or even early middle school. The writer handles the book more like an expanded diary. Writing for the younger reader. The possibility that the recommendations of other reads in the book might get your students checking out some old classics and favorites. Carolyn Major

Sorting Fur, Feathers, Tails and Scales by Marcie Aboff 2011 Capstone Press Data Mania Series 978-1-4296-4526-3 Math; African Animals; Classification Matt Maticus shows students different ways to organize animals into groups using various characteristics. I liked the many simple ways shown to organize animals into groups. Full-color photographs demonstrate various ways of grouping animals along with easy-to-read text. Good explanations of bar graph and Venn diagram. On-page definition of Glossary terms make text easier to understand. Large, easy-to-read font and short sentences make the text very approachable to young readers. Great for 2nd graders learning these math skills. Other titles in the series are Pigs, Cows and Probability; Analyzing Doggie Data; Lions and Tigers and Graphs! Oh My!





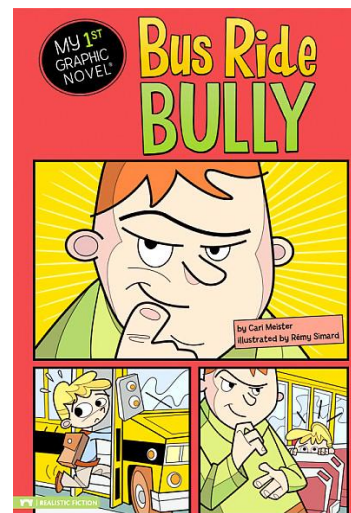
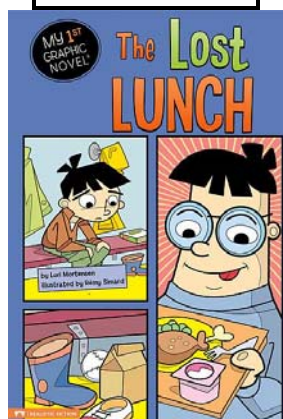
A Day at the Fire Station by Lori Mortensen
2010 Capstone Press First Graphics: My Community 978-1-4296-4508-9 Communities; Fire Stations; Fire Fighters. Follows fire fighters through a typical day at the fire station using a graphic novel format. Great information in a fun format! Full color graphics accompany simple text perfect for 2nd graders learning about their community helpers. Back cover of book explains how to read a graphic novel. Table of Contents, Index, Read More, and Internet Sites all included. Other titles in the series are Going to the Dentist, A Visit to the Vet, and Working

First Day, NO WAY! Lori Mortensen My First Graphic Novel 2011, Stone Arch Books Character Building-school related theme Graphic Novel Easy Reader.

A great introduction to graphic novels, this is a short book about Kaylee and Jenna. They have always been in the same class, until now. Going into a new school year separated from her best friend is both sad and scary for Kaylee. She learns how to make new friends and have fun with both her new and old friends. This is a very good introduction to graphic novels for young readers. I would recommend this book to students in kindergarten through second grade. The format will be attractive to even reluctant readers. Beginning with easy to follow instructions on how to read graphic novels, this book includes colorful panels with speech bubbles, and action and sound words. Each page also has a few simple sentences explaining the action, making it a really good book for beginning readers. The book also features an "About the Author" and "About the Illustrator" section, a glossary, discussion questions, and writing prompt ideas. The sentence structure, format and valuable life lesson included in the book make this a very appealing book for any library collection.

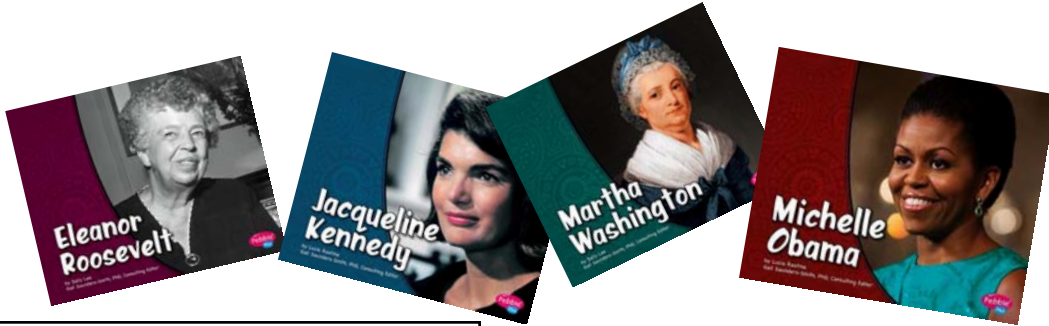


More books by
Lori Mortensen



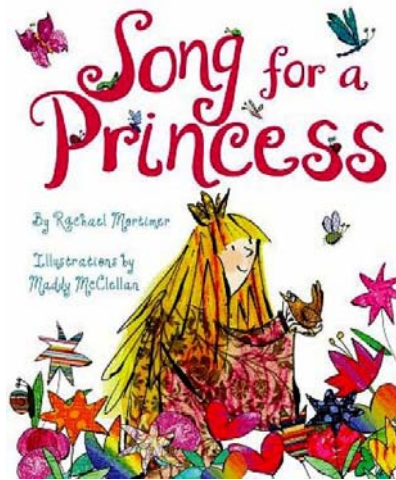
Eleanor Roosevelt Sally Lee First Ladies Capstone Press 2011 978-1-4296-5010-6
Biography History Character Traits

Eleanor Roosevelt is the story of the life, family, and accomplishments of one of our nations most influential first ladies. This is an excellent beginning biography for students in kindergarten through 2nd grade. For a library looking for good, comprehensive, early level biographies this one fits the bill. With full color photographs on every other page and simple text, this biography gives a complete and accurate look at the life of Eleanor Roosevelt. A time line running along the bottom of the text pages gives readers an easy look at important events. The book includes a glossary and index as well as additional reading and Internet site suggestions.



Song for a Princess Rachael Mortimer
2010 Chicken House 978-0-545-24835-8

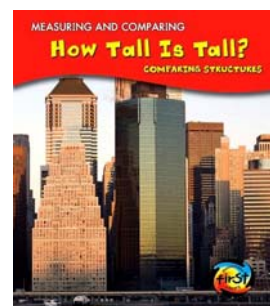
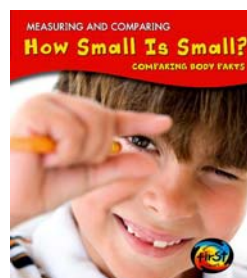
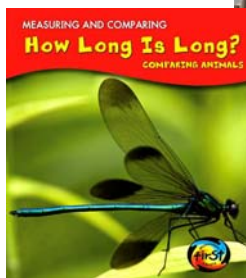
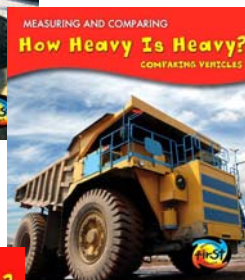
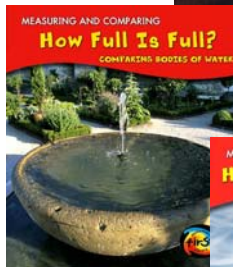
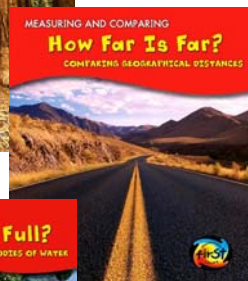
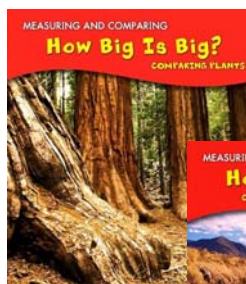
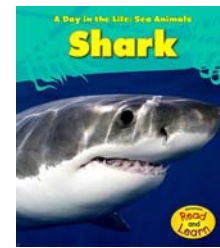
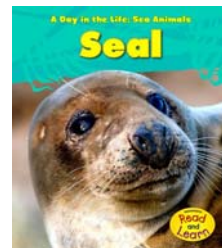
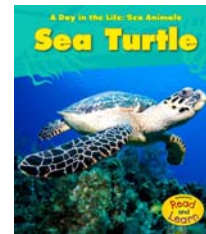
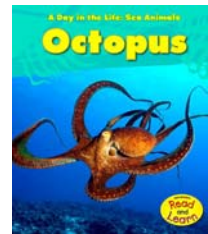
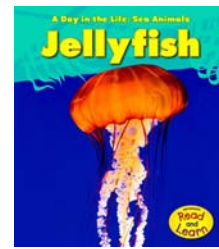
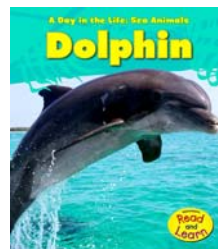
Writing, Reading A princess and her friend share a love of words but then her friend moves away. The princess is so sad the birds try all kinds of different things to cheer her up, but nothing works. Finally a little bird sings back to her some of the words that he had saved from her and her friend and she feels better and thanks the little bird. A very cute book with especially enchanting illustrations that would make an excellent read aloud. The book is very colorful and has such nice illustrations. They are pen and ink with textures included from fabric, etc. The story is simple but very cute and could be used for a writing lesson. Vanessa Hoffman



Ghoulish Ghost Stories Joan Axelrod-Contrada
2011 Capstone Press Scary Stories 978-1-4296-4574-4 A book about some very famous hauntings. An excellent book on one of the most popular subjects in my library. A very visually pleasing book on such a popular subject for elementary school children. The graphic design of the book is modern and has "photographs" of ghosts which the students enjoy. The stories of hauntings are at an appropriate elementary level - no too spooky and include some ponderings about whether ghosts are real. Other books in the series are: Scary Folktales (ISBN 978-1-4296-4571-3), Creepy Urban Legends ISBN 978-1-4296-4572-0), Bone-chilling Myths (ISBN 978-1-4296-4573-7) Vanessa Hoffman

Jellyfish 978-1-4329-4000-3
Dolphin 978-1-4329-3999-1
Octopus 978-1-4329-4004-1
Seal 978-1-4329-4002-7
Sea Turtle 978-1-4329-4001-0
Shark 978-1-4329-4003-4

A Day in the Life: Sea Animals Life Science - physical characteristics, habitats, behaviors Reading - non fiction. The series looks at an individual animal. It shows a typical day and explores different aspects such as behavior, diet, movement, sleeping, predators and environment. This is a great series for introduction animals and non fiction text elements. I love this series! The photographs add interest with a close up approach. The text is appropriate for primary students but exciting enough to intrigue students K-3rd. These books will be used to begin research on an animal. They give a very quick look at the life of each animal in a typical day. I highly recommend this series for primary students. I will look for more books in the Day in a Life series. I look forward to using them with students. Claire Shadow



How Full Is Full? Comparing Bodies of Water. Vic Parker 2011 Heinemann

Library Measuring and Comparing 978-1-4329-3957-1 Math and Science Set of 7 books that teach different aspects of measurement, written for level M or level N readers Great visuals are used help to understand the different types of measurements.

Each book in the series use great examples and visuals of the measurements it is teaching. For example, this book explains, it would take 30 glasses of water to fill a bucket (they show a drawing of the glasses and a bucket). Each book can be used in another curricular area (for this book you could use it to teach measurements and bodies of water). Other books in the series are: How Long is Long?, How Far is Far?, How Tall is Tall?, How Heavy is Heavy?,

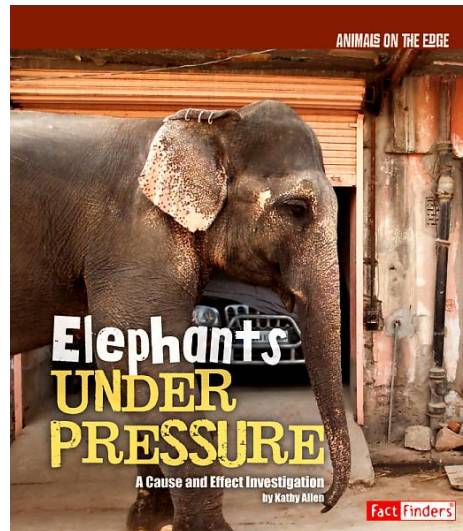
Elephants Under Pressure By, Kathy

Allen 2011 Capstone

Cause and Effect Investigation 978-1-4296-4534-8

6th grade Life Science An engaging look at the cause and effect human population and development has on the animal kingdom.

This book will make the reader pause and think about their "footprint" in society. These books are filled with many well placed photo's and other visual aids (such as maps, flowcharts and text boxes) to help the reader see and understand the information written. Each short book is filled with easy to understand information, perfect for research for 3rd-6th grade. There are 4 books in this series- Elephants Under Pressure, Deformed Frogs, Mystery of Whale Strandings, and Polar Bears' Search for Ice. Recommend.



Cool Crafts with Newspapers, Magazines, and Junk Mail

Green Projects Jen Jones Capstone Press 2011 978-1-4296-4764-9 Art, Recycling, Nonfiction. Learn how to reuse everyday materials to make fun craft projects with this handy guide. Each of the nine project ideas includes a materials list and step-by-step instructions with full color photographs. Each projects also provides vocabulary definitions, handy tips, and interesting tid-bits about recycling. Students in 4th through 9th grade will enjoy making these cool and crafty projects, all the while learning about the importance of recycling.

My Food Pyramid Healthy Eating

Rebecca Rissman Heinemann Library,

2011 978-1-4329-3983-0 Health,

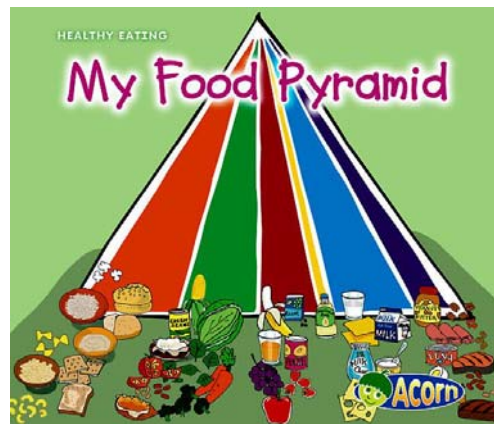
Wellness, Food Pyramid, Food

Groups. My Food Pyramid is the

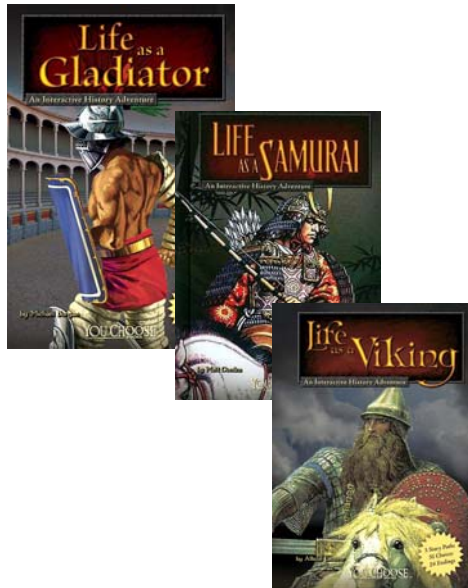
perfect book to introduce healthy eating habits and the food pyramid to students in kindergarten through second grade. Beginning with a

colorful illustration of the food pyramid and then introducing each food group with full color photographs and simple text descriptions, early readers will have a good understanding of healthy eating habits after reading this book.

The back of the book includes a quiz, picture glossary, index, and some discussion questions and teaching ideas for parents and teachers.



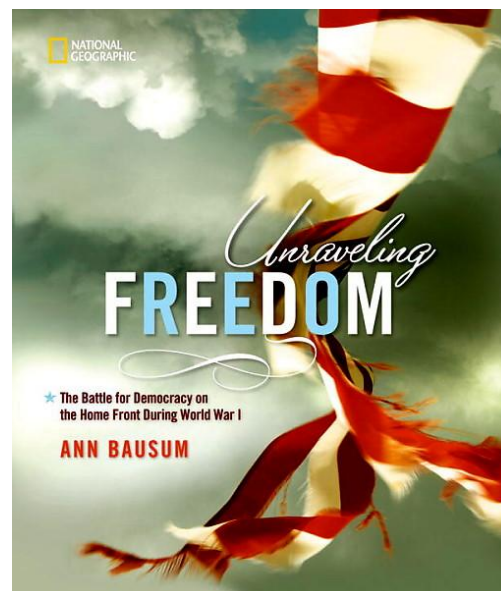
Trapdoor Spiders by Molly Kolpin, ISBN: 978-1-4296-4521-8 The text is simple yet informative with an interesting spider fact on each page. The photographs are amazingly detailed catching the spiders in their daily activities. There is a glossary at the back but each word from the glossary is also defined at the bottom of the page where it is used. Each book makes for highly useful research tools. The page layout is functional as well as engaging including a heading, text box, photograph and the spider fact. Each book also includes a simplified life cycle diagram. Denise Taggart



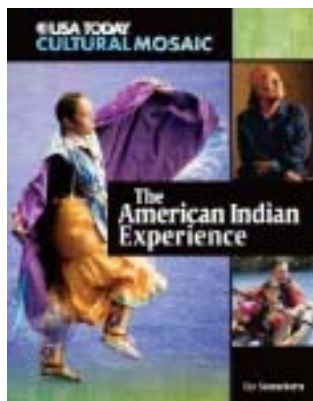
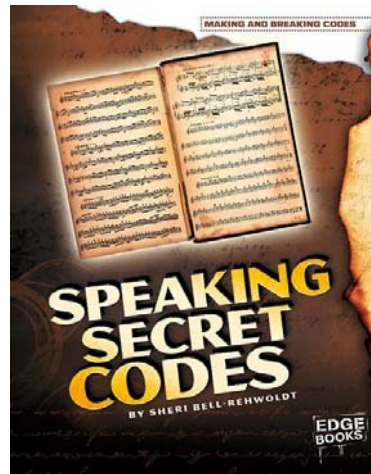
Life as a Gladiator by Michael Burgan, ISBN:978-1-4296-4784-7

In this series of Choose your own adventure books the reader can find out what it was like to be a Gladiator, Viking or Samurai. Each book includes a mix of factual information as well as a story with different outcomes depending on the path the reader chooses. The illustrations are detailed, colorful and placed generously throughout the book. Young readers will have fun exploring the ancient life of a Gladiator, Viking or Samurai. History comes alive as you read about weapons, kings and emperors, battles, training and famous people from the past. Each book includes a Time Line of important events, other research ideas, internet sites, further reading and an index. Denise Taggart

Unraveling Freedom Ann Bausum 2010 National Geographic 978-1-4263-0702-7 Non-Fiction History World War I Government and Politics" An extensive look at how freedoms in the United States are challenged and changed during times of war, particularly World War I. Great book about politics and freedoms in the USA during World War I. Beautifully done! This title obviously took some extensive research and was put together very well. Red title pages and large, bold type beginning letters accompany every new idea. The quotes are a great addition to those pages as well. Full page illustrations and photographs give readers a look at the people and events of the time period. High level reading, would recommend for middle school and high school. All text features are present. The Guide to Wartime Presidents gives additional information and comparisons to other wars. Timeline at the end shows the events in this text. Extensive bibliography would be great for an example of citations. Stephanie Shelton

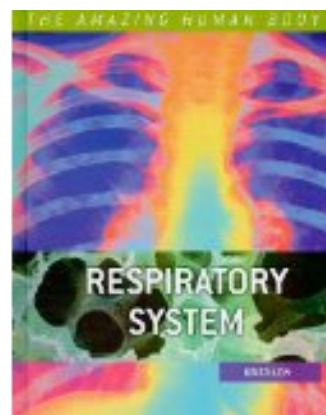


Speaking Secret Codes Bell-Rehwoldt, Sheri 2011 Capstone Press Making and Breaking Codes 9781429645690 Secret Languages; Cryptology; Codes Discusses different methods for speaking secret codes. The books in this series are great for beginners of cryptology and those who might be interested in designing a science-fair project display, and they will enhance collections that are weak in this fascinating subject area. "These titles look at various types of codes and ingenious deciphering methods. Concise information and interesting history, photographs, and do-it-yourself suggestions to keep readers interested. Learn the history behind some of today's most useful and popular codes, and then have fun creating a language all your own! Other titles in the series: Breaking Secret Codes; Speaking Secret Codes" Nancy Avalon



The American Indian Experience Liz Sonneborn 2011 Lerner Publishing Group USA Today Cultural Mosaic 978-0-7613-4086-7 Social Studies. This book spotlights American Indians and their many and varied contributions to US society in the fields of arts, sports, religion, culture and history. I appreciated this book which offers varied information on American Indians contributions to US culture including their traditions and customs. This book uses many articles and photographs from USA Today which supplement the text highlighting the contributions of the American Indian culture. It also includes suggestions for students interested in researching their own heritage as well as a glossary, source notes, a bibliography and a list of additional resources. Lani Nordeck

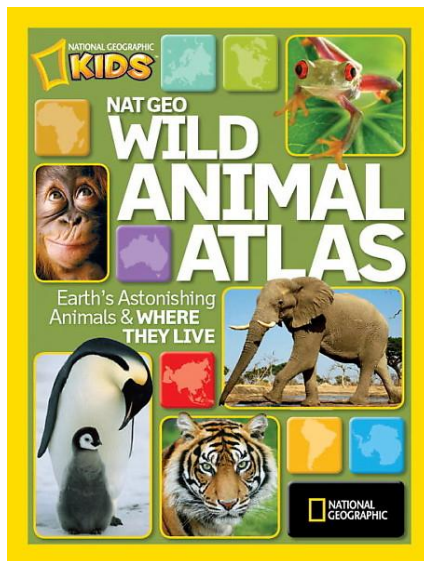
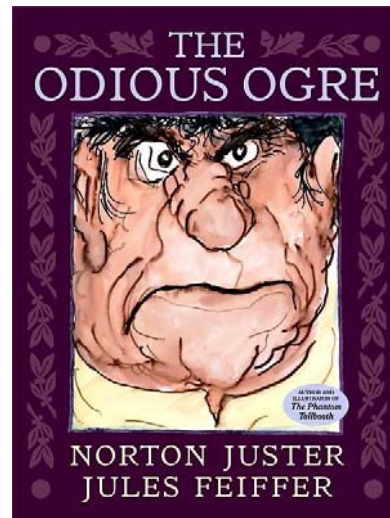
Respiratory System Kristi Lew 2010 Marshall Cavendish Benchmark The Amazing Human Body 978-0-7614-4042-0 Science In this book, students learn about the Respiratory System including how the system works, disorders of the system, as well as how to keep healthy and strong. Other titles in the series include the Circulatory, Digestive, Endocrine, Excretory, Immune, Nervous, Reproductive, and Skeleton Systems and Muscles, The Senses and Skin. I think this book would be an excellent addition to any school's science collection. This book makes good use of colorful illustrations, photographs and captions. The text is written in a student friendly style. It also includes a glossary, bibliography and a list of additional resources, both text and on-line. Lani Nordeck



The Odious Ogre

Juster, Norton

2010 Scholastic 2009932556 Ogre is really rotten and terrorizes the countryside, until he takes a wrong turn and encounters a kind young lady who does her best to help him. Love this book. What a great story. The pictures are terrific and the underlying lesson of the story is one any child can use. That you can change a persons attitude just by not responding to theirs. Although in the book it is more "Killing the ogre with kindness" but truly you can see that not stooping to someones level can actually help turn them around. Another great book from the author of "The Phantom Toll Booth." Definitely a great addition for read alouds. .Carolyn Major

**National Geographic Wild Animal****Atlas** National Geographic 2010

National Geographic 978-1-4263-0727-0 science. A look at wild animals and where they live. A fun fact filled atlas for young readers. Vibrant pictures and interesting facts make this book. The books strong points are the pictures. and its layout. The book is done as an atlas. Easy to read maps, "spotlight" spreads that look at animals in-depth, intro to ecosystems and a look at endangered animals. The pictures are vibrant and colorful. I think this would be a great intro for kids to different animals. Carolyn Major

The Sleep Sheep McQuinn, Anna 2010

Chicken House, Scholastic 9780545231459 Fiction; Sheep; Bedtime Sylvie can't sleep so she tries to count sheep--that won't stay still! Fun, active illustrations that will keep readers entertained with the sheep's antics. PreSchool-Grade 2. Sylvie exasperates her mother when she avoids bedtime. When her mother suggests she count sheep, Sylvia gives it a try, but they won't stay still. They dance, swim, and rollerblade, making it impossible for her to get a tally. The cartoon drawings depict scenes of Sylvie's imagination and are full of fun details. The Sleep Sheep moves along at a rapid clip with enough humor to be a successful read-aloud. Nancy Avalon

